

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1 - 8. (*Cancelled*)

9. (Previously Presented) A first network for local telephony including:
a plurality of serially-connected jacks including a first jack, each of the serially-connected jacks adapted to receive a plug;

each of the serially-connected jacks having two pairs of contact members, a first pair and a second pair, and a connecting/breaking mechanism for connecting corresponding contact members of the first and second pairs, respectively, the connecting/breaking mechanism adapted to be operated by a pin of a plug inserted in the respective jack so that the corresponding contact members of the first and second pairs are electrically connected when no plug is inserted in the respective jack and are electrically disconnected when a plug is inserted in the respective jack;

each contact member of the first pair of each jack which has a subsequent jack in the series of jacks being connected to the corresponding contact member of the second pair of the subsequent jack in the series; and

the contact members of the second pair of the first jack being directly connected to a second network or to second equipment; and

a connector plug insertable into each one of the serially-connected jacks and having pins for contacting respective contact members of the jacks, those of the pins, which are adapted for contacting the contact members of the first pair, being connected to a third network or to third equipment, so that when the connector plug is inserted in one of the jacks, the connector plug, by

operating the connecting/breaking mechanism of one of the jacks, acts as a circuit breaker for signals communicated between jacks subsequent to said one of the jacks in the series of interconnected jacks and the second network or second equipment, and at the same time connects said subsequent jacks to the third network or the third equipment and disconnects said subsequent jacks from the second network or the second equipment.

10. (*Previously Presented*) The first network according to claim 9, wherein the connector plug has a manual switch which is connected between said pins that are adapted for contacting the contact members of the first pair of one of the jacks and the third network or third equipment so that when the connector plug is inserted in one of the jacks, signals from and to subsequent jacks are routed through the connector plug and, in one position of the manual switch, said subsequent jacks are connected to the third network or third equipment and, in another position, to the second network or second equipment.

11. (*Previously Presented*) The first network according to claim 9, wherein the connector plug has an automatic switching unit which is connected between said pins that are adapted for contacting the contact members of the first pair of one of the jacks and the third network or third equipment so that when the connector plug is inserted in one of the jacks, signals between subsequent jacks are routed through the connector plug and, in one position of the automatic switching unit, said subsequent jacks are connected to the third network or equipment and, in another position, to the second network or second equipment.

12. (*Previously Presented*) The first network according to claim 11, wherein the automatic switching unit includes a switch and a dial tone detector, the dial tone detector connected to control the switch and connected to lines to the third network or third equipment for

detecting dial tones for making the automatic switching unit take said one position if a dial tone is detected from the third network or equipment.

13. *(Previously Presented)* The first network according to claim 11, wherein the automatic switching unit includes a switch and an off-hook detector, the off-hook detector controlling the switch and connected to said pins of the connector plug adapted for contacting the contact members of the first pair of one of the jacks, the off-hook detector adapted to detect an off-hook state of a telephone set connected to any said subsequent jacks when the connector plug is inserted in said one of the jacks for making the automatic switching unit take said another position if no off-hook state is detected.

14. *(Previously Presented)* The first network according to claim 11, wherein the automatic switching unit includes a switch and a ringing signal detector, the ringing signal detector controlling the switch and connected to those pins of the connector plug adapted for contacting the contact members of the second pair of one of the jacks, the ringing signal detector adapted to detect ringing signals and to make the automatic switching unit take said another position if a ringing signal is detected.

15. *(Previously Presented)* The first network according to claim 11, wherein the automatic switching unit includes:

a switch;

a dial tone detector, the dial tone detector connected to control the switch and connected to lines to the third network or third equipment for detecting dial tones for making the automatic switching unit take said one position if a dial tone is detected from the third network or third equipment;

an off-hook detector, the off-hook detector controlling the switch and connected to said pins of the connector plug adapted for contacting the contact members of the first pair of one of the jacks, the off-hook detector adapted to detect an off-hook state of a telephone set connected to any said subsequent jacks when the connector plug is inserted in said one of the jacks for making the automatic switching unit take said another position if no off-hook state is detected; and

a ringing signal detector, the ringing signal detector controlling the switch and connected to those pins of the connector plug, that are adapted for contacting the contact members of the second pair of one of the jacks, the ringing signal detector adapted to detect ringing signals and to make the automatic switching unit take said another position if a ringing signal is detected.

16-22. (*Cancelled*)